

Speech ICPD – Felicia Bechtoldt, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

Session: Population dynamics and sustainable development

Distinguished Excellences,

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has achieved significant progress in the past few years in the area of reconciliation of work and family life, gender equality and mainstreaming ageing, as part of our demographic resilience strategy.

Our approach to have an evidence-based intervention in order to respond to people's needs. We conducted the largest Gender and Generations Survey and we've learned that 50% of people in Moldova would like to have 2-3 children, but they decide to have less children due to a lack of childcare infrastructure and the lack of men's involvement in childcare.

The Government of Moldova jointly with the Parliament, and in partnership with UNFPA and other development partners, started a comprehensive policy program to expand choices for families with children, and support them to balance their work and family life.

I would like to mention a few of these achievements:

We made changes to our legislation to provide more flexibility for working parents, while fathers are encouraged to take paternity leave and engage more in child care.

A separate direction, and an essential one, was the work with the private sector and public institutions to promote and apply family-friendly policies at the workplace.

We improved our legislation and now our private sector has a legal basis to create a family-friendly environment at the workplace. Employers can open a daycare, mini-creches, and breastfeeding rooms to support working parents with children to combine their professional and parental roles.

These changes are also very important for the employers, because they bring added value to motivate their personnel to stay in their companies, this being a win-win situation both from a social and economic perspective for the Government.

To reduce social, economic, cultural and political inequities and to ensure gender equality as a fundamental right, the Government approved a National Program for promoting and ensuring equality between women and men for 2023-2027.

The program has 90 actions and are directed towards reducing the structural gender inequalities through gender-sensitive policies, reducing the gender pay gap for equal work, and encourage men to engage in initiatives in care, education and other feminized areas of the labor market.

In order to create the conditions for active and healthy aging, to fully respond to the needs of elderly people, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, jointly with the

UNFPA, has developed a National Program to promote active and healthy aging for 2023-2027. This program has 43 actions and focuses on mainstreaming the principle of active aging in all sectoral policies.

We are currently piloting long-life education programmes, such as „University for the 3rd Age” at the State University of Moldova in order to increase the access of elderly people to educational activities and services.

We are working on developing a National Digital Platform to ensure equitable access to IT equipment for the vulnerable elderly population, build digital skills and empower their access to quality social services.

All these achievements, along with other interventions, leads to responding to the population changes that we are facing today.

Having said that, I would like to take this opportunity to assure you about our commitment to continue further progress towards the full realization of the ICPD.

Thank you.